WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An active external change aid for assisting in the application or removal of articles worn externally on the body of a wearer, the active external change aid comprising at least one effect generating element.

2. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the effect generating element moves at least a portion of the article from a first point to a second point during application or removal of the article.

3. The active external change aid of Claim 2 wherein the at least one effect generating element emits energy.

4. The active external change aid of Claim 3 wherein the at least one effect generating element is selected from the group consisting of a magnet, an air jet, and a thermal cell.

5. The active external change aid of Claim 3 wherein the at least one effect generating element comprises at least one moving part.

6. The active external change aid of Claim 5 wherein the at least one moving part is selected from the group consisting of a paddle, a lever, a bladder, and a compressible material.

7. The active external change aid of Claim 6 wherein the at least one moving part is automatically actuated.

8. The active external change aid of Claim 6 wherein the moving part is moved by a force generator selected from the group consisting of electric power, a motor, a pneumatic device, a hydraulic device, and a spring.

9. The active external change aid of Claim 5 wherein the effect generating element includes a first region of compressible material interposed between two or more second regions of less compressible material.

10. The active external change aid of Claim 9 wherein the first region of compressible material is at least 10% compressible under a load of .1 pounds per square inch.

11. The active external change aid of Claim 10 wherein the compressible material is an open cell foam, a closed cell foam, a rubber, a plastic or a combination thereof.

12. The active external change aid of Claim 5 wherein the effect generating element comprises a plurality of plates, pivot points, bladders, magnets or combinations thereof.

13. The active external change aid of Claim 3 wherein the effect generating element comprises a material which is a electrostrictive, a magnetostrictive, a shape memory alloy, or a combination thereof.

14. The active external change aid of Claim 2 wherein the active external change aid further includes a control system to regulate the effect generating element movement.

15. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the at least one effect generating element is a thermal cell, magnet, hook and loop fastener, adhesive, air jet, vacuum pad, semi inflatable bladder, lever, paddle, pincer, clamp or combination thereof.

16. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the effect generating element connects at least a portion of the article in a coordinated position during application of the article.

17. The active external change aid of Claim 16 wherein the at least one effect generating element includes a fastener selected from the group consisting of tapes, magnets, electromagnets, hooks and loops, adhesives, cohesives, vacuum pads, interlocking fasteners, pincers, clamps and combinations thereof.

18. The active external change aid of Claim 16 wherein the at least one effect generating element has at least two regions with different coefficients of friction.

19. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the effect generating element performs a transformation which modifies at least a portion of the article from a first condition to at least one second condition.

20. The active external change aid of Claim 19 wherein the transformation comprises a change in material property within the article.

21. The active external change aid of Claim 20 wherein the change in material property is a change in flexibility, size, tackiness, or combinations thereof.

22. The active external change aid of Claim 19 wherein the effect generating element produces a thermal effect, magnetic field or electric current.

23. The active external change aid of Claim 19 wherein the transformation comprises an activation or deactivation of an adhesive.

24. The active external change aid of Claim 19 wherein the transformation is temporary.

25. The active external change aid of Claim 19 wherein the transformation comprises connecting a first portion of the article with a second portion of the article.

26. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the at least one effect generating element comprises sensors responsive to signals selected from the group comprising radio frequency, infrared, voice actuation, acoustics, and a combinations thereof.

27. An active external change aid for assisting in the application or removal of articles worn externally on the body of a wearer where the active external change aid is a changing mat comprising at least one effect generating element.

28. The active external change aid of Claim 27 wherein the effect generating element comprises a first region of compressible material and one or more second regions of compressible material.

29. The active external change aid of Claim 28 wherein the first region of compressible material lies between the one or more second regions of compressible material.

30. The active external change aid of Claim 29 wherein the second region of compressible material is less compressible than the first region of compressible material.

31. The active external change aid of Claim 30 wherein the first region of compressible material is at least 10% compressible under a load of .1 pounds per square inch.

32. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the active external change aid is configured to operate while the wearer is lying down, sitting or standing upright.

33. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the effect generating element is at least partially covered.

34. The active external change aid of Claim 1 wherein the effect generating element comprises a retaining lip.

35. The active external change aid of Claim 34 wherein the retaining lip may hold one or more articles in a stacked configuration.

36. The active external change aid of Claim 34 wherein the stacked configuration is held against the retaining lip by a force applied to a portion of the stacked configuration.